



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
October 2, 2003

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The Honorable Ann M. Veneman  
Secretary of Agriculture  
Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0003

Dear Madam Secretary,

The United States Department of Agriculture has adopted a plan to increase jobs for Americans with disabilities throughout its operations by not less than 1/2 percent per year. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) Commodity Operations has proposed to increase Javitts Wagner O'Day Program (JWOD) participation among its programs through at least a 1/2 percent increase in JWOD Program acquisitions in FY 2004. I support the implementation of those goals established by the USDA/FSA for the JWOD Program, in FY 2003-2005. They include:

Goal Number 1 - Increase USDA's participation in the JWOD Program by increasing the dollar amount of purchases of products and services on the Procurement List.

Goal Number 2 - Increase USDA's participation in the JWOD Program by adding new products and services to the Procurement List (PL) thereby increasing the number of jobs (FTE) created for people with severe disabilities.

Goal Number 3 - Promote USDA's successes as it increases its participation in the JWOD Program.

Proposed additions in progress:

- Vegetable Oil - Domestic
- Dessert Bases, Dry - Domestic

Proposed increases in progress:

- Vegetable Oil - Export

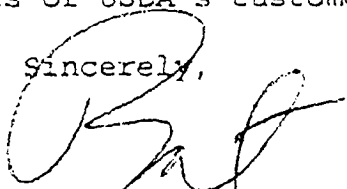
In my district, Arc-Diversified, located in Cookeville, TN, produces commodities for foreign humanitarian aid and domestic assistance programs each year. The Kansas City Commodity Office is the purchasing agent for the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), buying thousands of tons of products for export

humanitarian aid annually. FAS has recently requested instantized, fortified, non-fat dry milk (INDM) in commercial pack sizes, and non-instantized, fortified, non-fat dry milk (NDM) for overseas distributions. Historically, milk is purchased through the Price Support Program, usually precluding JWOD Program participation. The need for commercial pack sizes, as well as the very large quantities of INDM and NDM opened the door for additional JWOD opportunities. We anticipate additional requests from FAS for INDM and NDM for export humanitarian aid will result in quality employment opportunities for persons with disabilities who live in my district.

The need for Bakery Mix, INDM and Vegetable Oil for export feeding has driven increased participation for the products currently procured through the JWOD Program and manufactured by Arc-Diversified thereby increasing jobs for this hard-to-serve population in my district. USDA has been a valuable partner and large contributor to the effort to increase the use of these products in domestic and export programs.

I support the USDA's efforts to (1) expand the current vegetable oil export packaging and delivery program currently on the JWOD procurement list, and (2) extend the procurement listing for this product to add domestic vegetable oil production in order to meet the requirements of USDA's customers.

Sincerely,



BART GORDON  
Member of Congress

BJG/dp

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